

# West Dunbartonshire Council

The Committee is specifically seeking a response to the following

- details on what parts of Additional Support for Learning provision are working well and what are not, and any reasons they can provide which might help to explain why aspects are working well or not.

| Working well?  | How do we know?   | Not working so well?  | How do we know?  |
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| Presumption to mainstream  | 94.8% of our pupils with additional support needs are supported in mainstream settings and our monitoring of these supports via school improvement processes, Team around the child (TATC) meetings, Central Officer monitoring and liaison informs us this approach is successful for almost all and results in improved outcomes and appropriate supports to overcome barriers. | Presumption to mainstream for some children and young people  | For a small cohort of children and young people, the presumption of mainstream has been proving challenging and necessitated alternative planning. This is challenging for a number of reasons, mainly: financial constraints, placement options available. The impact of the journey of entering and leaving mainstream on the child or young person, their family, staff and sometimes peers |
| ASN Strategy which focusses on developing: asn estate and provision, CLPL, approaches to Learning and Teaching, Assessment and Reporting | Improved self-evaluation evidence<br><br>Increased opportunities for leadership experiences   | Managing budgets to meet increased demand for supports for range of neuro-diverse, social and emotional needs and nature of these which have been | Monitoring of budgets<br><br>Monitoring of placements  |

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| <p>Processes, Leadership, parental engagement and workforce management</p>  | <p>Increased Continuing Lifelong Professional Learning (CLPL) offers at all levels of workforce</p> <p>Improved collaborative planning and delivery</p> <p>Improved learners' experiences</p> <p>Increased availability of support in specialist settings for those who require it</p> | <p>increasingly complex and longer term</p>  | <p>Monitoring of pupil support and transition plans</p> <p>Professional dialogue with a range of Officers</p>                    |
| <p>Introduction of SCERTS model to support learners who have severe and complex needs</p>                         | <p>Staff feedback/professional dialogue</p> <p>Monitoring of plans and interventions</p> <p>Increased engagement of children and young people</p>  | <p>Managing expectations and conflicting views: parents/schools/Trade Unions (TUs)</p> <p>Rights to Inclusion and mainstream/parents wishing alternative placements/TU's responses to violence and aggression/</p> | <p>Professional dialogue</p> <p>TATC planning minutes</p> <p>TU liaison meetings and correspondence</p> <p>Parental requests</p> |
| <p>Introduction of CIRCLE and Up Up and Away Frameworks to support learners in mainstream settings and ELCC's</p> | <p>Staff feedback/professional dialogue</p> <p>Monitoring of plans and interventions</p>   | <p>Support staff demands: roles and remits reflecting increasing range and complexity of needs/need for more clarity in healthcare in schools guidance/increase in need for support staff versus reductions</p>    | <p>TU feedback and dialogue</p> <p>Support staff surveys</p> <p>Monitoring and analysis of requests for support</p>              |

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|   | <p>Increased engagement of children and young people</p> <p>Team around the child feedback</p>  | <p>in budgets and funding gaps. This will result in less support staff to meet increasing needs.</p>   |   |
| <p>Effective policies and practice to support ASN in all settings</p>   | <p>Impact monitoring of TATC plans and GIRFEC plans</p> <p>School improvement visits</p> <p>Professional dialogue and reflection with Additional Support Needs (ASN) Coordinators and school /Early Learning Childcare Centres (ELCC'S) leaders</p> | <p>Current focus on responses to violence and aggression resulting in a detrimental impact on understanding and responses to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)/Trauma informed practice</p> | <p>TU correspondence</p> <p>Professional dialogue</p> <p>School liaison and visits</p> <p>Parental correspondence</p> |
| <p>Funding for Access to schools counselling</p>  | <p>Feedback from young people</p> <p>Monitoring of referrals</p> <p>Provider reports</p> <p>Professional dialogue with staff</p>  | <p>Temporary Funding Streams - the nature of temporary funding streams creates issues for continuity in planning, embedding approaches and policies, staff development and recruitment.</p>    | <p>Monitoring of recruitment</p> <p>Professional dialogue</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation processes</p>              |
| <p>Availability of support from Central support teams- Educational Psychologists, Collaborative Support Service and Interrupted Learner Service</p> | <p>Staff feedback/professional dialogue</p> <p>Monitoring of plans and interventions</p> <p>Increased engagement of children and young people</p>   |  |   |

- **What are the barriers to supporting this provision?**

The challenges of reduced impact of existing or reduced budgets and the much increased costs of partner providers and staff costs at a time when our children and families are demonstrating and telling us they need more help. Our ASN trajectory has increased year on year and the capacity to meet the range of needs without a similar trajectory of available budget is difficult.

Partner providers are increasingly requesting additional staffing to support individual placement agreements and removing themselves from Procurement Frameworks, resulting in challenging financial positions.

Post pandemic it is clear there is an increase in mental health support needs, speech and language therapy needs and in support for the impact of ACES and poverty. In addition established partners in 3<sup>rd</sup> sector have had funding reductions which impact in ability to engage supports as effectively as previously.

- **any examples of good practice in this area;**

The collegiate approaches developed across our Specialist and mainstream settings to provide equitable high quality CLPL, learning, teaching and assessment as part of our ASN Strategy. This has improved practice leading to improved planning and outcomes for all of our children in specialist settings.

**SCERTS**

Our SCERTS (Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, Transactional Supports) Champions from across all specialist setting continue to meet termly to progress the consistent implementation of the approach, share practical strategies and enhance collaborative working; build upon vital communication and emotional regulation skills being developed in each setting.

Throughout the sessions specialist setting staff will continue to develop inclusive practices and provide opportunities to learn with and from others through our shared collegiate calendar. There are plan this month for our ASN Leads and SCERTS Champions to collaborate and create a case study format for use at the May In-Service Conference. This case study format will enabled all settings the opportunity to learn from each other and share good practice in the range of ways SCERTS has positively impacted on:

their own professional skills and confidences in meeting learners needs, the engagement of parents and carers with SCERTS and the impact of SCERTS on learners experience and improved outcomes.

A representative from all specialist setting has engaged in a Moderation planning event with colleagues from across the West Partnership. This joint moderation activity is an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of standards and expectations within the learning, teaching and assessment cycle for our learners with complex additional support needs. The cohort of staff involved are from across the West Partnership authorities and in comparable specialist settings so absolutely appropriate to collaborate and learning with and from. This ASN moderation activity will take place in February 2024. Within WDC specialist settings a similar model of Moderation activity is underway across all specialist settings to increase collaboration and confidence around assessment and moderation practice across the ASN Sector.

### **BSquared Tracking Toolkit**

In line with our ASN Strategy all specialist setting teaching staff and leaders have engaged in the BSquared Tracking Toolkit Professional Learning. Evaluations demonstrate that all staff rated the quality of the professional learning activity as *good* or *very good*, with all staff stating that their confidence and knowledge regarding tracking for children with ASN had increased as a result of this learning. The BSquared Tracking toolkit is now being fully implemented across all specialist setting to ensure a more consistent and robust approach to tracking progress, achievement and attainment as well as identifying next steps in learning. There has been an BSquared Strategic Group established comprising of a BSquared Champion representative from across all specialist settings. This group of BSquared Champions lead on the consistent and shared approach to implementation across settings as well as support colleagues within their own establishment. To date one establishment has utilised this toolkit within their review processes and received very positive feedback regarding confidently being able to detail progress and evidence of the child learning journey.

### **Vale of Leven Communication Base Residential – Good News Story**

Recently pupils in the Vale of Leven Communication Base pupils engaged in a three day residential to Ardentenny. Fifteen individuals ranging from S2 - S6 participated in a variety of challenging outdoor experiences including archery, climbing, abseiling and canoeing. Through a variety of group challenges set and this outdoor experience the pupils strengthened their teamwork and communication skills.

### **Whole Family Wellbeing Update**

The WD for Families Hubs are now launched and staffed with 6 skilled outreach workers who can support the access to appropriate supports at the right time for families in their local communities. The Hub Outreach workers are currently delivering group and individual work with parents /carers, children and young people on a range of themes including sleep, toileting, behaviour supports as well as stress and anxiety. These themes have been identified via our current Request for Parenting Support processes. These referrals have come from a range of partners including, Social Work, GP, HV, Community Link Workers, Paediatric Specialists, Educational Psychologists and HT's. This group of staff currently support approximately 90 families on a 1 to 1 or in a group capacity offering parental support.

Working in partnership with the Outreach Team we have the Neurodevelopmental Team supporting families 1 day per week in each of the Hub locations. The ND Team will be delivering group and individual work with carers, children and young people, who are currently waiting on a neurodevelopmental assessment or have recently received a diagnosis.

Over the summer 2023 there were a variety of drop in sessions arranged within each hub as an opportunity for families to tell us what they are looking for by means of support whilst they wait for their child's assessment, or for families who already have a diagnosis so we can hear from them what worked, what could have been better and what they think will help other families on this journey. Over 800 parents and carers were contacted directly and invited to the drop-in session across the summer by health care team. Approximately 300 families attended. The information and data gathered was used to develop a programme of support from the ND Team for families on the ND Pathway, support include: sensory support, behaviour support, anxiety support, toileting support, sleep support and support around restricted eating. In addition, this team supported approximately 55 families during the October week within the WD for Families Hub as well as play opportunities in Levensgrove Park.

To develop our Workforce and Culture we have offered multi-agency professional learning to all staff. These sessions will develop a holistic workforce approach to supporting families on the ND Pathways. Currently we have Tanya Tennent delivering a series of 3 sessions across all locations and there have been very well attended and received by parents, carers and staff. Tanya Tennent is an individual with lived experience of ASD, ADHD and Sensory Processing Disorder, building capacity and knowledge in : understanding and supporting executive dysfunction, understanding and supporting sensory needs and understanding anxiety and distressed behaviour.

- **how does the authority support good relationships with parents and young people, especially where there are disagreements around the provision of additional support for learning and reach collaborative agreement**

We recognise this has potential to be a challenging area and that relationships are key to managing expectations and in ensuring a very effective team around the child process. Provision of ASN support is a finite resource and coming to a consensus can prove challenging. Our professional learning offer supports staff in leading very effective team around the child planning processes which are key to building and maintaining good relationships with families. In addition we have reviewed and revised our professional learning programme to support school leaders in leading Solution Oriented Meetings. These ensure staff are equipped to lead discussions reflecting the views of parents and young people where there is disagreement, with a focus always on planning together to find a solution.

We have established structures for identifying where the provision of additional support beyond what a mainstream school can offer. These joint processes include a range of partners: Social Work, Educational Psychologists (EP), Central Officers and School Staff. The processes for reviewing and planning supports are informed by the voices of parents and young people which are gathered and reported into the appropriate forums.

- **How many placing requests have been made over the last 5 years by parents or carers wishing that their children be educated in a specialist Additional Support Needs (ASN) unit or school. And how many placing requests have been made by parents or carers wishing their children to be educated in a mainstream setting as opposed to a specialist ASN setting. The Committee would be grateful for the total numbers, along with the numbers of requests refused and agreed.**

We have had no formal placing requests due to the nature of our placement processes which support parents to engage in the Staged Intervention processes led by TATC meetings in schools and ELCC's. These in turn feed into our Joint Review Panel and Joint Assessment Team Processes, which allocate specialist placements.

- **How does the authority ensure that parents and young people are aware of the rights to various remedies under the 2004 Act?**

We signpost to the Enquire Website, WDC Website including our Staged Intervention Processes, GIRFEC paperwork and Advocacy supports

- **The Committee is aware that there can be variations in approaches to identification of ASN across local authorities and between primary and secondary schools. The Committee would be grateful if you could briefly set out how you ensure that children's additional support needs are identified and Seemis records are updated to ensure accuracy of the data.**

| How we identify?  | Updating of data?  |
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| <p><b>Primary</b><br/>Transitions planning from ELCC ensures that the range of additional support needs of any cohort is recorded and shared in an agreed timely manner with receiving school</p> | <p>All ASN data pertaining to the additional support needs of children and young people is recorded on SEEMIS under the recognised range of categories<br/>This is entered at transition into establishments and shared appropriately with staff who support via child's plans</p> |

Liaison with HSCP and Health Visitors ensures that those children with severe and complex learning or healthcare needs can seamlessly transition to primary school with the appropriate supports in place and a staff cohort who are able to meet their needs with the correct professional learning and training to do so

Where enhanced transition planning is required, then our revised transitions policy supports this approach with specific guidance is planning to engage parents, children and the range of staff who will support children as they progress to Primary School

Robust tracking and monitoring procedures in our primary schools, the role of the ASN Coordinator and our policies for meeting additional needs has ensured that we have a robust system of ensuring child's plans are effective, reviewed and reflect the views of children and families and that schools are able to identify and respond appropriately to these

In all planning our processes for Staged Intervention are key in ensuring appropriate monitoring and reviewing

Our CLPL programme for ASN Coordinators, (Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT'S) and our range of staff has ensured that we have developed a skilled workforce with increased knowledge and skills to meet needs.

The updating and revision of any recording of data is completed in line with child's planning processes in individual establishments



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| <p>Our approaches to Nurture training and implementation ensures that our schools are trauma informed and respond appropriately to children and families</p> <p>All establishments have a link Educational Psychologist who provides specialist support, advice and assessment</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Secondary</b></p> <p>Transitions planning from primary ensures that the range of additional support needs of any cohort is recorded and shared in an agreed timely manner with receiving school</p> <p>Liaison with HSCP and Health Visitors ensures that those children with severe and complex learning or healthcare needs can seamlessly transition to Secondary school with the appropriate supports in place and a staff cohort who are able to meet their needs with the correct professional learning and training to do so</p> <p>Where enhanced transition planning is required, then our revised transitions policy supports this approach with specific guidance is planning to engage parents, young people and the range of staff who will support children as they progress from Primary School</p> <p>Robust tracking and monitoring procedures in our high schools, the role of the ASN Coordinator and our policies for meeting additional needs has ensured that we have a robust system of ensuring child's plans are effective, reviewed and reflect the views of young people and families and that</p> | <p>All ASN data pertaining to the additional support needs of children and young people is recorded on SEEMIS under the recognised range of categories</p> <p>This is entered at transition into establishments and shared appropriately with staff who support via child's plans</p> <p>The updating and revision of any recording of data is completed in line with child's planning processes in individual establishments</p> |

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All establishments have a link Educational Psychologist who provides specialist support, advice and assessment. The EP and or DHT lead the Joint Assessment Team processes which review and revise plans for those young people for whom a multi-agency response to help is required

- **How does the authority ensure staff have adequate training on Additional Support for Learning provision?**
- CLPL workstream as part of ASN Strategy and informed by staff consultation, self-evaluation and dialogue
- Regular promotion of Gateway engage professional learning platform to support PRD/personal learning plans
- Regular review of staff professional learning needs via the LANA system on Gateway Engage and through the self-evaluation processes at professional forums
- Children's Services and Professional Learning self-evaluation processes to inform gaps/needs
- Promotion via a range of professional forums such as: ASN Coordinators, Children's Services Coordinators, Pupil and Family Support Worker forum, SLT Forums, Education Leader Meetings, ASN Strategy and shared workplans/collegiate
- Alignment with the Whole Family Wellbeing Programme of Professional learning

- **If parents/carers have a concern about the ASN provision in a mainstream school, what process can they follow to try and get it resolved?**

Our first advice is always to contact the school and meet with those who know the child as a learner best. This should instigate a TATC meeting which would help inform and review supports in place. In instance where resolution is challenging then a referral to link EP. Principal EP or C. Services Senior Education Officer (SEO) is advised which will then instigate further meetings and liaison regarding needs, strengths and next steps.

- **Where the provision of ASN is not working in specific cases in schools, what can teachers do about that? Is there support that can be accessed? What happens if the matter cannot be resolved?**

Our Policies and practices are shared with all class teachers and these provide support and advice on most appropriate approaches. These include following Staged Intervention processes for escalation and de-escalation of additional supports and referrals. In addition every school has an Additional Support Needs Coordinator whose role it is to oversee the implementation of Policy and Practice and ensure staff CLPL which is appropriate to this. Class teachers will have access to a suite of professional learning at establishment and Local Authority level, Google Classrooms and resources and training provided by Education Scotland and the West Partnership.

**Education, Learning and Attainment  
West Dunbartonshire Council**